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Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 12 August 2011 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the joint statement adopted by the participants of the sixth general meeting between the United Nations system and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and its associated institutions, which was held at the CARICOM headquarters in Georgetown, on 28 and 29 July 2011 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under sub-item (e) of agenda item 122. I would also ask that the joint statement be circulated as a document of the Security Council in response to its resolutions 1631 (2005) and 1809 (2008), particularly paragraph 17 of resolution 1809 (2008).

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

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Annex

Joint statement of the sixth general meeting between representatives of the Caribbean Community and the United Nations system

28 and 29 July 2011, Georgetown, Guyana

1. The sixth general meeting between the United Nations system and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and its associated institutions was convened at the headquarters of the CARICOM secretariat in Georgetown, on 28 and 29 July 2011. Opening remarks were made by Acting Secretary-General of CARICOM, Ambassador Lolita Applewhaite. The Secretary-General of the United Nations sent a message that was delivered by the Head of the United Nations delegation, Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs. The meeting, which enjoyed wide participation from representatives of the CARICOM secretariat and its associated institutions as well as from representatives of the United Nations system, was co-chaired by Ambassador Colin Granderson, Assistant Secretary-General, Foreign and Community Relations of the CARICOM secretariat, and Mr. Fernandez-Taranco.

2. The Acting Secretary-General of CARICOM underlined the usefulness of the sixth general meeting, lauding the biennial encounters as invaluable for the review of cooperation between the United Nations and CARICOM, as the general meetings permitted the frank exchange between the partners and facilitated strategic planning for the enhancement of future collaboration. She expressed appreciation for the continued support and collaboration that CARICOM has received from the United Nations system in the region's efforts towards sustained social and economic development. She informed of the recent decisions of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM regarding the matter of prioritizing the focus and direction of the community and underscored the need to identify concrete projects in specific areas of priority that will yield impact on the ground, ensuring maximum, measurable and concrete benefits to the citizens of the CARICOM region. In this regard, she acknowledged the discussions regarding the utility of the regional strategic framework, as reflected in the interim and final reports, and reiterated CARICOM support for follow-up with a view to ensuring that it is the appropriate mechanism to deepen collaboration between the United Nations and CARICOM. She also reiterated CARICOM concern regarding the decrease in United Nations representation in the region in certain critical areas, such as security and regional development, and deplored the closures of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and United Nations Development Programme offices and the protracted absence of a Chief of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean subregional headquarters.

3. The Secretary-General of the United Nations welcomed the opportunity to deepen cooperation between the United Nations system and CARICOM. He thanked CARICOM countries for their commitment to multilateralism and regional cooperation, as well as their leadership on climate change and on the issue of non-communicable diseases. He also commended the progress made by the Caribbean region towards the Millennium Development Goals, yet expressed concern at the negative effects that the global financial crisis, climate change and organized crime were having in the region. The Secretary-General reiterated the strong commitment of the United Nations to strengthening its partnership with

CARICOM. In particular, he welcomed the recommendations on the United Nations and CARICOM regional strategic framework and expressed the hope that a dialogue would proceed on how best to enhance the coherence of United Nations engagement in the region.

4. The meeting received a report on progress achieved in the implementation of commitments made at the fifth general meeting, held in New York, in February 2009. The main outcome of that meeting was the decision to implement the United Nations and CARICOM Regional Strategic Framework in order to provide for enhanced coordination between the two organizations. Accordingly, an interim report was jointly completed, in 2010, by the Department of Political Affairs and the Foreign and Community Relations Directorate of the CARICOM secretariat and a final report was produced in 2011. Both reports reflected extensive consultations with participating United Nations agencies, departments, funds and programmes, as well as with the CARICOM secretariat and community institutions. The sixth general meeting considered these two reports on the implementation of the Framework. The reports showed that CARICOM and the United Nations are working together in many areas that had been agreed to be of critical importance to the region's development and security objectives. Indeed, ongoing United Nations programmes cover a broad spectrum of activity, and contribute to the four strategic objectives of the Regional Strategic Framework, namely: (a) maintaining momentum towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; (b) supporting regional economic integration, growth and development; (c) creating a safe and secure environment for citizens and respect for the rights of all; and (d) enhancing governance, transparency and accountability in CARICOM.

5. Through the consultation processes that underpinned the two reports, it was recognized that the Regional Strategic Framework had served a useful purpose in raising awareness about the need for a more coherent United Nations approach to cooperation in the Caribbean region. The Framework was also helpful in identifying the areas where cooperation was aligned with CARICOM priorities and areas where United Nations involvement could be strengthened. The above notwithstanding, there was broad consensus that the current Framework mechanism, as managed by the Department of Political Affairs and the Foreign and Community Relations Directorate, was no longer the most appropriate instrument for coordinating United Nations activities in the region. Indeed, since the Framework was first proposed in 2007, the United Nations system had established and enhanced other frameworks and mechanisms for cooperating with CARICOM and CARICOM member States.

6. As a result, the final report on the Regional Strategic Framework recommended that (a) the Department of Political Affairs and the Foreign and Community Relations Directorate focus their follow-up on the specific commitments for cooperation between the United Nations and CARICOM made during the general meetings, with the result that the Framework in its current form was no longer required; and (b) a discussion be initiated on how the United Nations system could achieve greater coherence in the Caribbean region, in partnership with the CARICOM secretariat and in support of CARICOM member States. Both recommendations were adopted at the sixth general meeting. Participating United Nations agencies, departments, funds and programmes committed themselves to initiating a dialogue on the nature of a more appropriate coordination mechanism to enhance coherence and effectiveness within United Nations system engagement in

the Caribbean, in partnership with the CARICOM secretariat and community institutions.

7. The meeting was apprised of CARICOM regional priorities and of the new thrust identified by the Conference of Heads of Government, in May 2011. An overview of the regional agenda was provided and indications were given as to how the CARICOM secretariat and its associated institutions envisaged implementing the agenda.

8. Of those regional priorities, seven broad thematic areas were identified as crucial areas for collaboration between the United Nations and CARICOM, including the implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy and institutional development matters. Other priorities were climate change, sustainable development and disaster management, energy, regional security, food security and food safety, human development, including health, education, gender and youth, and the role of information and communications technology for development. CARICOM reiterated the need to identify concrete projects in specific areas of priority that will yield impact on the ground, ensuring maximum, measurable and concrete benefits to the citizens of the CARICOM region.

9. It was recognized that the United Nations system was engaged in significant work in such areas at either the global or national level; the challenge was to identify areas within the framework of cooperation between the United Nations and CARICOM, where a regional approach would offer added value to ongoing national partnerships. CARICOM and United Nations participants thus engaged in discussions on how to strategically focus their cooperation to maximize progress in the priority areas in view of the transnational scope of such challenges, CARICOM and United Nations participants emphasized information-sharing, capacity-building and institutional strengthening as key tools for implementing their respective mandates. In this regard, they agreed that there was a need for early engagement to develop modalities for moving forward. Overall, the meeting provided a useful opportunity to move towards more coherent engagement in the organizations' long-standing partnership.

10. The meeting agreed that the seventh general meeting would take place at United Nations Headquarters, in New York, in 2013.